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*The DUTY and ADVANTAGES of promoting the Peace and
Prosperity; both of CHURCH and STATE.*

A
SERMON,

PREACH'D at the

Triennial Visitation

Of the Right Reverend FATHER in GOD,

OF SPRING,

Blackall
LORD BISHOP of EXON,

HELD AT

BODMYN, in CORNWAL,

AUGUST the 27th, 1712.

Before the Worshipful *Tho. Paske*, LL. D.
Chancellor of that Diocess.

By *PHILIP COLLIER*, A. M.,
Rector of *St. Columbe Major*.

Publis'd at the Request of the Chancellor, and the Reverend the Clergy.

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THE DUTY AND ADVANTAGES OF PROMOTING THE PEACE AND
PROSPERITY, BOTH OF CHURCH AND STATE.

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

ON THE NIGHT OF THE 11TH OF NOVEMBER, 1790.



OF THE

LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

HELD AT

BODMAYN, IN CORNWALL.

AT 6 O'CLOCK, ON THE 27TH INST.

Before the Worshipful The Mayor, LL.D.
Chancellor of that Diocese.

By WILLIAM COLLETT, A.M.

Rector of St. Columba's Chapel.

Printed at the Request of the Chancellor, and the Reverend the Clergy.

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the Strand, M.DCCXC.

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A Visitation S E R M O N, Preach'd at
Bodmyn, in Cornwall.

P S A L M CXXII. 6, 7, 8, 9.

*Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem; they
shall prosper that love thee.*

*Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity
within thy Palaces.*

*For my Brethren and Companions sake, I
will now say, Peace be unto Thee.*

*Because of the House of the Lord our God,
I will seek thy Good.*

IT is the Opinion of most Interpreters, that *this* Excellent Psalm was, *at first*, penn'd by Holy David, upon the settling the Ark of God in Mount Zion; and that it was, *afterwards*, made a Part of the Jewish Devotion, in *their* Anniversary Commemorations of that Great Blessing.

And accordingly we may observe, that the People of *Israel* are *here* instructed, not only to Congratulate each other, upon the Purity, the Freedom, and Uniformity, of Divine Worship, *thus* Establish'd amongst *them*; but *they* are also, very earnestly exhorted, and abundantly encouraged,

A Visitation SERMON,

raged, to seek the Peace, and to promote the Prosperity, of their Church and Nation.

r. 1. 2. *I was glad (says the Holy Psalmist) when they said unto me; we will go into the House of the Lord; our Feet shall stand in thy Gates, O Jerusalem.* He esteem'd it to be the Greatest of Satisfaction, the Highest of Honours, and the Noblest Priviledge, of all *those* which the Seed of Abraham pretended to; that God was pleased to pitch his Tabernacle among *them*, to admit *them* to his Covenant, to his more especial Presence, to *the House where his Honour dwelt.*

r. 3. And from hence he go's on, to represent the Praise, the Beauty, and Goodliness of that Holy City; not from the Order, or Strength, of its Buildings; not from the State, or Magnificence, of its Palaces; but from the Unity, and intire Agreement, of its Inhabitants. ---- *Jerusalem (says he) is built as a City, that is at Unity in it self----*

r. 4. And he gives us very particular Instances of *this* Unity, as well with relation to *their* Ecclesiastical, as *their* Civil, Polity. For he immediately mentions, that *thither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord, to testify unto Israel, and to give Thanks unto the Name of the Lord.*

r. 16. This was that City of Holiness, in which, while the Temple of God stood there, *all the Jewish Males appeared three times in every Year*, by a solemn Statute and Testimony of God; where they all performed a Strict, a Regular, and an Uniform Devotion; and assembled, with one Heart, and with one Soul, to celebrate the Mercies, and Favours, of that Divine Providence, which watch'd over, and protected, *their Nation.*

And

And, at the 5th Verse, we have as full a Description of the Excellency of their Civil Government ;
 ---- For *there was the Seat of Judgment, even the Seat of the House of David* ---- There they not only waited for the Loving-kindness of God, in the midst of his *Psa. 48. 8.* Temple ; but attended at the Throne of the Great King, to receive the Impartial Determinations of Justice. There was the Judicatory of *David* ; whom God was pleased to take from the Sheepfolds, that he *Psa. 78. 70.* might rule Israel his People : And not of David only, *71.* who was to be gathered to his Fathers, but of his Children after him, and of His Seed for evermore.

Such a delightful prospect of Affairs, would even force from Us that Acclamation of the same Inspired Author, *Happy are the People that are in such a Case ! Psa. 144.* For what Condition can Human Thoughts conceive *15.* of a more abundant Temporal Prosperity ? Here was no *Schism*, to disturb the Peace of the Church : Here was no *Faction*, to distract the State. In the one, none dared to offer Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins, but they that were called of God, as was Aaron. In the other, there was none to assume Royal Authority, but such as were the Sons of Nobles : The Priesthood was not invaded, by every One, that would pretend a Title to it : Nor were the Higher Powers made subject, to the Lawless Attempts of, Popularity, or Ambition.

These were the Happy Circumstances of *Jerusalem*, at that time : And the Royal Psalmist very passionately

ly exhorts the *Jewish* People, to *pray* for the Long Continuance of such a settled Peace and Government: And thereby, likewise, He sets an Excellent Example, to every other Nation, of that *Duty* and *Affection*, of that *zealous Concern* and *sincere Endeavours*, which they owe to the *Prosperity* of the *Church of God*, and to the *Welfare* of that *Community*, of which they are Members.

And therefore, not to speak particularly of the Duties of the Sacred Function, nor to give Directions to *those* in the Discharge of *their High Calling*, who have the Honour to be admitted to it; which seems more agreeable to the Character of a Spiritual Governour, than of a *Fellow-Labourer, and Companion, in the Gospel*: I have chosen to recommend This General Advice of the Psalmist, and to make it the Subject of my present Discourse. And I hope, it may not be thought a very Unseasonable Subject, whilst there are so many Vile Endeavours made use of, to disappoint those Pious Designs, which are now carrying on, as well for the Peace of *Europe*, as the Prosperity of this *Church and Nation*.

The Arguments which I shall insist upon, to this purpose, will be no other than such as are contained in the Words before us: And, indeed, These are of that Weight and Importance, they are of that Universal Concern and Extensive Obligation, that whatever may deserve a Good Man's Regard, may be naturally reduced to them. For,

I. If

I. If we consider only our own *private Benefit* and *Advantage*, we cannot more effectually consult these, than by *praying* for, and endeavouring to *support*, those Civil and Ecclesiastical Establishments under which we live. *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem ; they shall prosper that love thee.*

II. If we consider our selves as Members of Society, and as Persons who are Allied to the Publick, we are obliged to prefer the *Welfare* of the *Community*, to any Little *By-Interests* of our own : I say, as we all stand in such a publick Relation, it becomes our Duty, *for our Brethren and Companions sake, to say, Peace be unto thee.* And

III. We have yet a farther Obligation laid upon us, by our *Spiritual Relation*, as we are Members of the Church of Christ. *Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy Good.*

First then ; If we consider only our own *private Benefit* and *Advantage*, we cannot more effectually consult these, than by *praying* for, and endeavouring to *support*, those Civil and Ecclesiastical Establishments under which we live. I say, *by praying for, and endeavouring to support them* ; because, the one without the other, our Prayers without our Endeavours, is a down-right Prevarication, and a base Hypocrisy.

He that in such a *solemn* and *devout* Manner addresses himself to Almighty God, must either imagine, that the Great *Searcher of Hearts* will be mock'd, and must design, on purpose, to affront Him, by such provoking Formality ; or else, must have some Desires after the *Blessing* which he requests, and a sincere Concern for the *Attainment* of his Petitions : And he that is in Earnest for so *good* an End, will be as Diligent in the Use of those Means which lead to it : And there is Nothing which it is our Duty to pray for, but it becomes our Duty likewise, by all Lawful Methods, to further and to promote it.

To go on, therefore, with the Proposition laid down, viz. *That we cannot more effectually consult our own private Benefit and Advantage, than by praying for, and endeavouring to support, those Happy Establishments under which we live.*

Now all Mankind agree in this, and indeed it is no more than what we are *all* sensibly convinced of ; That, by a kind of Natural Instinct, we incline to desire our own Happiness : Self-Love is essential in our Constitution, and born and bred up with us ; in-somuch, that even those who have no Sympathy for others, do still retain a tender Regard to themselves ; And the *Apostles* Assertion will always hold good to the End of the World, *No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh*, Eph. 5. 29.

It is therefore an Engaging Recommendation of that Peace and Unity, which I am speaking of, that such Endeavours

Endeavours, as we lay out for the Publick, do effectually promote our own private Happiness, and keep us easy and secure in that Station, which God hath allotted to us in this World.

A Person thus Dutiful and Submissive to his Lawful Governours, has no Cause to be afraid of *That Sword, which is to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil*; He hath no Fears of Punishment, to disquiet him; He incurs no Legal Penalties, to impoverish his Fortune; He hath no Guilt, to disturb his Conscience; He provokes no Enemy to do him Violence. He leaves it to *those*, to whom God has intrusted them, to hold the Reins of Government, and to direct those Affairs which are above his Sphere; without intermeddling in such *Matters as are too high for him*, or pretending to Censure what he cannot understand: He is void of all that Uneasiness and Vexation, which continually attend upon those *heady and high-minded Men who are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities*; vvhho, being always given to Change, and labouring at *New Models of Government*, are like a Troubled Sea, which cannot rest, foaming out their own Shame, and bringing a *swift Destruction upon themselves*.

So that, vvhould but our Modern Refin'd Politicians admit of *this one* Principle, vvhich is recommended by the *Apostle*, as the surest Foundation vvhereon to build the Welfare of Societies ---- I mean, that of *every One's doing his own Business*, and discharging the Duties of that State of Life, to vvhich the Providence

1 Thes. 4.

11.

of God hath called them; there would be none of those *Factions* in the *STATE*, or *Divisions* in the *CHURCH*, which disorder the *whole Body*, and consequently every particular Member of it.

For tho' there are some who imagine, that it may prove for their Advantage to *create Tumults*, and to *foment Discontents*; who either think themselves *too Wise* to be Govern'd, or *too much Neglected* to be Easy; and look upon it as their *Interest* to lay all Things in *Confusion*, in hopes, thereby, of bettering their Conditions: Yet we may generally observe, that such *base Attempts* fail of Success; and it does not very rarely happen, that those very Persons who would fish in Troubled Waters, have been over-whelmed in the fatal Tempests which they themselves have raised.

Chr. 29. Accordingly we find it to be a Part of that Message which God sent to the *Jews*, by the Prophet *Jeremy*, concerning their *Conduct* and *Behaviour* under the *Babylonish* Captivity; not that they should offer Violence to their Oppressors, or embroil the Quiet and Tranquility of that Government under which they were reduced; but, on the contrary, they are commanded, to *seek the Peace of the City, whither God had caused them to be carried away Captives, and to pray unto the Lord for it* ---- All which is urged upon this express Consideration, That *in the Peace of that City, they should have Peace.*

Ver. 7.

For

For the *real Benefit* of any Society, and of every individual Person in it, are inseparable; and there is no Disturbance that can happen to the *one*, but what as nearly affects the *other*. And tho' some Men of *desperate Fortunes*, and as *desperate Consciences*, have, for a while, thriven upon the *Plunders of Rebellion and Sacrilege*; yet their Number bears a very small Proportion, a Proportion not worth mentioning, with that of *those* who have *failed, or fallen*, in such *Accursed Attempts*. And even they, whose *loud Complaints* against their *Governours*, have drawn the *Sword of Resistance*, have felt the Remedy, which they *applied*, to be much worse than the Evils, which they suspected; have found their *own private Aims* miserably defeated, *themselves* involv'd in the Common Ruin, and been forc'd, when it was too late, to wish for that Peace which their *own Hasty Forwardness* had broken.

But, as *private Regards* ought to have least Weight and Consideration, with a *good Man*, or a *Christian*; so I shall content my self with having just touch'd upon *this* Argument: And proceed to recommend the Duty before us, from a more *noble and generous Principle*, *Viz.*

Secondly, That as We are *Members of Society*, We are oblig'd to prefer the *Welfare* of it to any *Little By-Interests* of our own; and, for our *Brethren and Companions* sakes, to wish *Jerusalem Prosperity*.

For no Man was born purely *for himself*; nor was *this World* designed for the Accommodation only of a *single* Person: And so many are the Necessities and Exigencies of Human Life, that, without a *mutual Support* and *Assistance*, the whole Race of *Adam* would be the most Miserable of Creatures.

So that if every One were left to pursue nothing else but what he found *his own* Account in, there could be nothing but *Confusion*, and every evil Work.

Phil. 2. 4. The Apostle therefore gives this Excellent Advice to the Christians; *Look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the Things of Others*: Not to let our *own Humours*, and *selfish Opinions*, to dictate in Opposition to a *Publick Advantage*; nor to think it reasonable, that the *whole* should suffer, to gratify the *Incroaching Demands* of a *few*.

For the various Conditions of Mankind are so order'd and dispos'd by *Divine Providence*, that there is a *Necessary Dependance* upon each other; insomuch, that no One is capable of subsisting long upon his own Stock, or of answering the Common Necessities of Nature, without the *good Offices* and *Intercourse* of *Society*. And tho' Persons of Higher and more Exalted *Stations*, frequently look down upon *Inferior Orders* with Contempt and Disdain, yet still They are Useful; the very *meanest* of them is *Beneficial* to the *Publick*, and contributes *somewhat* to its *Advantage* and *Happiness*: For (as the inspired Preacher observes) *the King himself is served by the Field*.

Since,

Since, therefore, there is such a *mutual Dependance* in *Society*, there ought likewise to be a *mutual Tender-ness* and *Affection* between the *Members* of it. He that does, in any Measure, contribute to our Well-being, or our Quiet, in the World, does certainly, by so doing, *oblige* Us to the like Returns: This is but a Part of Justice, and a Debt of Gratitude; and it must be a manifest *Violation* of *all these*, to prefer our *own Fancies* and *Desires*, to the *Safety* and *Prosperity* of those *Brethren* and *Companions*, who have been *thus Benefi-cent*, at least Serviceable, to Us.

These are Notions, not only agreeable to the *Doctrines* of *Revelation*, but to the *Dictates* of *Reason* also; so that, in all Ages of the World, and from every Country that *History* gives us any Account of, we have several Instances of such *Generous Virtue* and *Publick Service*; we have many Bright and Shining Examples to instruct us, how far *private Interest* must give way to *publick Good*, and how much less *particular Persons* are to regard themselves than a *whole Community*.

So that, since Mens Opinions are, and will always be, different, in many Cases; since it is not possible for every One's Wishes to succeed, or that each single Person should reap *that* Private Advantage which he might desire, or expect; it becomes his Duty to acquiesce, and to submit; and to have no farther Regard to his *own particular Hopes*, or *Sentiments*, than what is consistent with a *general Prosperity*.

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Nay,

Nay, to make one Step farther ; tho' it may happen, that we suffer in our own *private Concerns* ; tho' we meet with *Disappointments* to our *Inclinations* ; or such *Incroachments* upon our *single Right*, as cannot Legally be redress'd ; we are not to engage the Publick in our Private Quarrels, nor to indanger the *whole*, for so inconsiderable a *part*.

For the *Happiness* and *Tranquility* of a Nation is of that vast and inestimable Value, that nothing can be reckon'd *too dear* to purchase it : In the pursuit of which, it is not what we may gain or lose to our selves ; it is not what *Inconvenience*, or *Disadvantage*, may attend our *private Affairs*, that should sway with
 1 John 3. us --- For we ought to lay down our *Lives* for the Bre-
 16. thren. And since they are all included in the *Common Interests* of *Society*, the Preservation of *these* ought to be our *chief Aim*, our *principal Concern*, and our *constant Endeavour* : And I know no surer Way towards promoting those *common Interests*, nothing that so immediately tends to the Settlement and Stability of them, as a *firm* and *zealous*, a *stedfast* and *unmovable Adherence* to those *Happy Establishments*, which we are *New Blessed* with, both in CHURCH and STATE.

For *Changes* of *Civil Government*, and *Breaches* upon a *National Constitution*, are dangerous, and draw the most dreadful Consequences after them : Such Attempts are but *the Beginnings of Sorrows*, and the *Forerunners* of that *Desolation*, which gives up *Thousands* to *Death* or *Misery* ; which makes no difference be-
 tween

tween the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*, the *Innocent* and the *Guilty*; which turns a Fruitful Land into a Wilderness, and *Fencied Cities* into *Ruinous Heaps*. And therefore, every Thing that may lie in our Power, to prevent such fatal and destructive Designs, is, and ever will be, a *Duty* which we *owe* to our *Country*.

And, whatever *favourable Constructions* Men have learned, of late Years, to put upon those *Schisms* and *Divisions* which are industriously propagated among us; However we may hear them represented, as *Harmless* and *Moderate* Errors, which, tho' they are of some *small Disadvantage* to the *Church*, yet the *State* needs entertain no Apprehensions of Danger from them; I say, notwithstanding all those *modest Pleas* and *Apologies* for *Dissenters*, there are no Causes more productive of *publick Troubles*, than *Different Judgments* and *Persuasions* in *Matters of Religion*.

For tho' (as a late Learned Prelate has truly ob-^{Bp. Laney}serv'd) *Civil Wars* and *Rebellions* have their Beginning,^{on 1 Thess.} for the most part, from the *Ambition*, or *Discontent*, of^{4. 11.} a few; yet, because the *People*, who are *Necessary Instruments* of that *Mischief*, are not apt to serve the *Ambition* of others, if it comes bare-faced to them, the *Mask of Religion* is always put on, where all *People* are concern'd, which makes it a *Common* and *Popular Interest*. And there is nothing, in which *Human Nature* is so easily transported beyond its due *Bounds*, as those *Disputes* and *Contentions* which border upon *Religion*. Witness those *Cruel Persecutions* raised by

the *Arrians* against the *Orthodox* in former Ages ; and the Implacable Fury of our *Wild Enthusiasts* of a later Date.

And from hence it is, that some Men have laid it down, as a First Principle, in their Systems of Policy ; by *Balancing of Parties*, to encourage *Faction*, and by *widening the Breaches of the Church*, to keep it very much in their Power to *shake the Foundation of all Government*. This they have experimentally found to prove successful ; and this, we may assure our selves, will always be their Chief Stratagem, as often as they shall judge it necessary to take Advantage of *Domestick Troubles*, either to gratify their *Avarice* and *Ambition*, or to shelter their *Guilt* from *Punishment*.

And the most Infallible Method we can take to *disappoint* their Devices, is to joyn so intirely and so unanimously in the *Interests* of the Church of God, as to leave no Room for such *Religious Contentions*, as may be artfully improv'd to *Civil Disturbances* ; to pray for, and to promote, the Preservation of our *Established Church*, whose Doctrines lay the best Foundation for the Security of the State, by forbidding all *Resistance* to the *Higher Powers*, upon Pain of *Damnation* ; and by injoyning *Obedience* to Them, not only for *Wrath*, but also for *Conscience sake*.

I am highly sensible, that *this* very Doctrine, *this* Doctrine of Peace and Subjection, has been represented as the Parent of *Sedition*, and the *Disturber* of our *Tranquility*. ---- This has been said indeed, but it hath
never

never been prov'd : And I may justly reckon *this* among the *other* Contradictions, which our *Assertors* of a *Moderate Obedience* are so very fond of, viz. That *Rom. 13. 1.* the Powers which are ordain'd of God, and are his Ministers, have no other Authority than what they derive from the People : That *they that Resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation* ; yet it is Glorious, and our Duty, to Resist : That *we must needs be subject,* *Ver. 5.* *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake* ; yet we may Rebel for Convenience, and to redress our Grievances : That we must *submit our selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake* ; yet it is lawful *1 Pet. 2. 13.* to strike and to punish Princes for Equity.

And when our Free-thinking Interpreters of Holy Scripture shall be able to reconcile such Contradictions as *these*, then I may allow them, that our Church is a Mover of Sedition : But till then, I can see no Pretence of Reason to imagine, but that the Truest Friends of the CHURCH, are the Best Supporters of the STATE, to which, for our Brethren and Companions sake, we are to wish Prosperity.

And this I take to be a very Necessary Consideration in those Times of Libertinism, when we have so much talk of a Magazine of Popular Power, and the Doctrines and Example of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, are thought of less Weight than the Commandments of Men.

For it is very plain, that those who *dissent* from our *Religious Constitution*, either found *Dominion* in *Grace*, and then easily assure themselves that they have a *Right* to *Dominion*, whenever it is in their Power to seize upon it : Or else, they set up the *People* as the *Original* of Government ; and, by this Means, justify *their assuming it into their own Hands* upon every Pre-
tence of Male-Administration.

Accordingly we find, that when *this* National Church maintain'd its Authority, the Prince sat secure upon the Throne ; but no sooner was the *first* overturn'd, but the *latter* was *shaken* ; *Rebellion* appeared bare-fac'd and open ; and this whole Land was laid waste with such Barbarous Cruelty and Unparall'd Violence, as might deter even our latest Posterity from every thing that carries the like Appearance for the future.

The Sum then of what I have spoken upon this Head amounts to thus much : That we have very great and manifest Obligations, to prefer the *publick* to our own *private Welfare* ; that *Attempts* upon *Establishments*, and *Disturbances* in a *State*, are of General Mischief and Ill Consequence, and have frequently their Beginning from *Differences about Religion* ; that we ought, therefore, to do our utmost to prevent both : And since this *Excellent Church* of ours most expressly and plainly asserts those Doctrines, on which the *Quiet* and *Security* of the *Civil Government* depends,
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it is our Interest, as well as our Duty, to *consult its* Peace, and to *wish its* Prosperity.

But this will yet be more evident from my

Third Proposition, viz. That we have a farther and an higher Obligation laid upon us, by that Spiritual Relation which we bear to the Church of Christ: Yea, because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee Good.

And here, indeed, it may not be altogether useless, to observe the Excellent Method of this *Psalm*, and that Admirable Order in which the Arguments of it are ranged before us; to take Notice, by what Degrees Holy *David* lays out our *Obligations*, and leads us gradually from that *Love* which We retain for our *own selves*, to that *Affection* which We owe to our *Neighbour*, and from Both to that *Duty* which We must pay to *God*: Because, from hence We may make this Just and Instructive Remark; That tho' We are allow'd to consult our *private Advantage*, where it may be pursu'd without interfering with the *publick*; yet where it do's interfere with *that*, We are engag'd to decline it; and further, that notwithstanding all those *Obligations* which Man can possibly lay upon us, We are under much Greater to Almighty God, and *these* must always take place when both are inconsistent.

For whatever Considerations of this Nature may prevail upon us, with respect to *Man*, they ought to have a more *powerful* Influence with regard to *God*.

For, allowing somewhat more than the Common Offices which we receive from each other, and which I have just now mentioned; allowing the utmost that Mortal can possibly do for us; and represent Ingratitude in the *worst* of Colours (and such a Complication of all Vices, can never be drawn in worse Colours than it deserves) --- Yet still *God* claims the Preference; *Acts 17.28.* He is our *first* and *principal* Benefactor; *In Him we live, move, and have our Being*; and all others are but the Instruments, whereby He conveys His Bounty to us.

But let this be never so plain and evident in it self, we may observe it to be quite otherwise in Human Practice; and there is nothing which Men do more easily dispense with, than their *Engagements* to *God*, and their *Concern* for the *Interests* of Religion; tho' Religion be their *chief Duty*, as well as the *surest Foundation*, of their Temporal Prosperity.

For it is not to be denied, but that the *Honour* of *God* was the First Design of our Creation: It was for this, that *God* made *Man* in *his own Image*, and endow'd him with those Noble Faculties, which render him capable of *knowing*, of *admiring*, of *adoring*, his Maker: It was for this, that he was pleased to institute Publick Worship, to set apart Sacred Places for it, vvhich Men might make known their Requests at
the

the *Throne of Grace*, and receive Divine Favours and Blessings : It was for this, that His Alone Son became an *High-Priest for us*, and has committed to His Ambassadors the *Ministry of Reconciliation* : It is, lastly, to this, that God hath annex'd all the Benefits and Promises of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come. *1 Tim. 4. 8.*

And can we imagine then, that we may safely treat that with Indifference and Disregard, vvhich God hath thought fit thus eminently to encourage and to provide for ? No certainly ; For as He hath the sole Disposol of Us, and of our Affairs, and doth according to His Will among all the Inhabitants of the Earth ; so he hath declared, That them that Honour Him He will Honour, and they that Despise Him shall be lightly Esteemed. *Dan. 4. 35. 1 Sam. 2. 30.*

Religion, therefore, is the Great Bulwark and Security of Civil Societies ; it is the due Practice of this vvhich renders God propitious to them, and fixes their Happiness upon a sure Basis.

But then we must remember, that it is not every thing that assumes the Name of Religion, or that carries along vvith it the Appearance of Divine Worship, that is really such. We have a very Remarkable Instance of this Nature, *Numb. 16.* vvhich we read, that *Korah, Dathan and Abiram* offered the like Incense, in the same Place, and to the same God, that *Aaron* did : And yet his Offering only was accepted ; vvhil'st theirs provoked God to destroy those Invaders of the Priesthood, with a Death as uncommon as it was astonishing. *Ver. 17. Ver. 32.*

It is not, therefore, a bare assembling of our selves together, a joyning in Prayers and Thanksgiving, in breaking of Bread, or in hearing of God's Holy Word, that I am now recommending ; but the Performance of *all these*, and the *other* Parts of Religious Worship, in such a Manner, in such Places, and by the Ministry of such Persons, as our Lord hath appointed.

For as no *Society* can long subsist without Order and Government ; as no *Publick Worship* can be exercised without some to Administer in Holy Things : So
 1 Cor. 14. 33. God, *who is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace,* in all Churches of the Saints, hath constituted those *Stewards* of His Sacred Mysteries, vvhho are to transact between Him and His Creatures ; and He hath promised, To respect their Services, to hear their Prayers, and to give Efficacy to all such Religious Offices as they have received Authority to perform, by virtue of their Commission.

But it is, at best, an *unwarrantable* Presumption to expect, that the same Benefits and Advantages should accompany the Ministrations of *others*, who have either *usurp'd* the Sacred Function, or have no other Title to it than what they derive from such *Ursurpers*.

For our Blessed Saviour, after His Resurrection,
 Mat. 28. 18 having *all Power given unto Him, in Heaven and Earth,* and being about to leave the World, was pleased to commit the Care, the Instruction, and Government of the Christian Church, to His Apostles, and *as his Father*

ther sent Him, even so to send them ; i. e. to give them Joh. 20. 21.
the same Commission to execute in the Church when He
was Gone, which His Father gave Him at His Coming, Dr. Ham-
that they might supply His Place, and perform those Offi- mond.
ces over the World, which He, being about to return to
His Father, could not Corporally do. And if our Lord
was commission'd, by His Father, to send the Apo-
stles, as His Proxies, to supply the Want of His Cor-
poral Presence; then those who received the like Com-
mission from Him, and were sent by Him, as He was
sent by the Father, were to delegate the same Power to
others also, and they again to their Successors, to the
End of the World.

And as this Ministry was derived from our Lord, so it
is to be continued and exercised in His Name : We are
not to look for Extraordinary Missions but upon Extra-
ordinary Occasions : And when Men pretend to call
themselves Apostles, as St. Paul was, not of Man, nei- Gal. 1. 1.
ther by Man; but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father,
unless they can likewise produce the Signs of an Apostle, 1 Cor. 12.
by working Wonders and mighty Deeds, we may reckon 12.
them among those many false Prophets that are gone
out into the World, or as so many Invaders of Authori-
ty in the Household of God.

For the Apostles settled Bishops in those several Chur- Dr. Brad-
ches, which they planted, to succeed them, in presiding ford on E-
over all others, and in admitting the Officers of the phes. 4. 11,
Christian Church to the Exercise of their respective &c.
Functions ; of which the History of those Churches,

even down successively from their Times, is a very clear and convincing Testimony. And from hence it is, that, in the Nicene Creed, the Holy Catholick Church is called *Apostolical*; because, the *Ministers* of it do derive their *Succession* from the *Apostles*, and act by Virtue of that Divine Commission, which our Blessed Lord received from the *Father*, and transmitted to them.

See Mr.
Bingham's
Origines
Ecclesie,
Vol. I. Ch.
3. Sect. 5.

And as the Power of Ordination was always allow'd to be a peculiar and distinguishing Priviledge of the Church of Christ, 'till the Modern Inroachments of some *Presbyters*, who assumed this Power to themselves; so we are to account of those only as the *Ministers* of Christ, and *Stewards* of the *Mysteries* of God, who have received this Ministry by such *Apostolical Succession*: And those Persons run a mighty Hazard of having all their seeming Religion turn'd into Sin, or at least ineffectually administred, vwho heap up to themselves such Teachers, as have no Right to those Promises of the Holy Spirit, vvhich our Lord made only to his *Apostles* and their *Successors*, and without which, all the Means of Grace lose the Benefit of their Institution.

As it is therefore the Happy Advantage of this Church of ours, that it is built upon the Foundation of the *Apostles* and *Prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone; as it is committed to the Government and assisted by the Ministry of those, who derive their Authority, by an un-interrupted Succession, from the *Apostles*, as they received theirs from our Blessed Sa-
viour;

viour; we cannot doubt, but that Publick Worship which is devoutly celebrated in it, will come up as an acceptable Sacrifice before God, will ascend as the Incense of a pure Offering into Heaven, and draw down such publick Blessings as may convince any, but an Infatuated People, how much it is their Interest, with a more than Ordinary Concern and Endeavour, to support That Church, which has so Good a Title to the Favour and Promises of God.

And accordingly, the Royal Psalmist, when he mentions our Duty with respect to Private, or Civil Interests, contents himself with *praying*, or *wishing*, for them: But when he speaks of *the House of God*, he expresses a more active Resolution, *I will seek to do thee Good*: i. e. I will improve all Opportunities, and make use of all those Means which are lawful and expedient for thy Peace and Prosperity. For we are not to *do Evil, that Good may come of it*; and tho' it be *Rom. 3. 8.* our Duty rather to part with our Lives, than with our Religion, yet neither of these can justify our Disobedience to the Higher Powers: And he that makes it his Choice *thus to resist unto Blood, and to glorify God by his Death*, hath the Testimony of a Good Conscience to support him here, and the Assurances of Glory to reward him hereafter.

But, blessed be God, the Profession of our Religion is, at this Time, safe and secured to us; and there can be no just Apprehensions of Danger to our Established Church, if Men could but be prevailed with, not

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to suffer any longer their pretended Fears and Jealousies, their groundless Scruples and Prejudices, to divide and to distract us. Would but those who boast of a mighty Veneration for the Holy Scripture, seriously consider the Advice of the Apostle, *To follow the*
Heb. 13. 7. Faith of those that have the Rule over them, and to submit themselves; what an entire Harmony would soon appear among us, in the Confession of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of us all?* With what *Meekness and Lowliness, with what Long-suffering and Forbearing one another in Love*, should we all endeavour to keep the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace?* With what delightful Agreement should we go up to the *House of the Lord*, and there, *with one Mind and one Mouth, glorify God?*

*Assemblys
Confession
of Faith,
1658.*

These are not such hard Terms of Communion as some have thought fit to represent them; it being the Acknowledgment of all the *Reformed Churches*, nay, of *those very Persons* who once raised themselves upon the Ruin of This Church of ours, *That it belongs to the Synods and Councils, ministerially to determine Controversies of Faith, and Cases of Conscience, to set down Rules and Directions for the better ordering of the publick Worship of God, and Government of His Church.*

And, indeed, those Matters of Faith, which we are bound to believe, are so plainly and clearly taught us in the Holy Scripture, and in those Creeds which have been received in the Church of God, in the purest Ages of it, that nothing but a vain Contentious

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Humour would bring them into farther Dispute.

And then, as to those probable Truths in which the Church hath Authority to determine, it cannot be thought unreasonable to oblige Men to Silence in them; *Because, the professing of such Controverted Truths is not necessary, but the Preservation of the Peace and Unity of the Church is.*

Bp. Sparrow's Pref. to his Collection of Canons, &c.

So that, upon the whole; would Men but learn to *think soberly, as they ought to think*; would they but esteem their Spiritual Governours as *wise and knowing, as devout and pious*, as themselves; they would leave it to *them* to determine in Matters of Opinion, or, at least, not separate from their Communion, to draw others to their own Private Persuasions; they would comply with all those Circumstances of Publick Worship, which are appointed only for the *Decency and Order* of it; and account Disobedience to their Ecclesiastical Superiours, to be more *heinous* and more *dreadful*, than the Use of an *Indifferent* Rite, or Ceremony.

But since we have greater Reason to *wish and pray*, than to *expect*, very soon to find such a Dutiful Temper in the *Disturbers of our Israel*; let us make some Advantage of the Example which they set us.

For if we look abroad, we may observe all those *Different Sectaries*, who pretend to *some* Religion, and the vast Number of *Deists* and *Socinians*, who have *little or no* Religion at all; we may observe *Geball*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, all combin'd, and *with one Consent*, *Confederates against us*: And tho' *Menasseh* envies

Ephraim, and Ephraim Menasseh, tho' they can agree in nothing else, yet in this they have joyn'd Hands, and seem inseparably united, That they together will be against Israel.

This, therefore, should teach us the like Methods of Prudence and Resolution: This should make us as cautious, as tender, as zealous, for the Interests of our Church, as they are active and vigilant to impair and to overturn them; always preferring these to the little trifling Advantages of the present World, and to every Thing else that may tempt us in it.

Then may we hope, to see our Jerusalem in Prosperity all our Life long, and Peace and Mercy upon the Israel of God: Then shall all those be ashamed and driven back who have evil-will at Zion: Then will God be jealous for our Land, and pity His People: Then shall we be reckon'd worthy of our Holy Profession, and meet to be Fellow-Citizens with the Saints in Light; and when we are removed from this State of Christ's Church Militant here on Earth, we shall be received into that Church which is now Triumphant in Heaven.

To the Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God, be ascribed all Honour, Power, Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now and for evermore. A M E N.

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